Assumptions for Existing Conditions and the No-Action Alternative

This paper addresses previouisly discussed assumptions which need further clarification or definition. The purpose of this discussion is to present issues as we understand them, and to discuss the varying points of view, where appropriate, that have been expressed. A proposal is presented following the discussion.

Issue 1: What Is Meant by the Term "Demand" in DWRSIM Modeling and Why Do CVP Demands Increase Between 1995 Level of Development and 2020 Level of Development?

As used in DWRSIM (and PROSIM) modeling, "demand" refers to the amount of water assumed to be "requested" by water contractors. The model tries to meet those demands each month but is constrained by prior water rights, water quality requirements, and compliance with the biological opinions. The Central Valley Project (CVP) and State Water Project (SWP) demands are shown to increase between 1995 and 2020. For example, Contra Costa Water District is currently using approximately 140,000 acre-feet per year, but has a contract for 195,000 acre-feet per year and their demands are expected to increase to that contract limit by 2020. However, because of the constraints described above, actual modeled water use may not reach these levels in any given year.

> **CALFED Proposal:** Continue to use appropriate CVP and SWP demands in the modeling effort and verify the precise volume of those demands.

Issue 2: What Assumption Should CALFED Make Regarding Future Drinking Water Regulations?

CALFED's current proposal is to assume that current drinking water standards will continue into the future. Although it is recognized that drinking water standards may become more stringent, there is no specific information to support changing CALFED's current proposal. One representative expressed a desire to possibly provide additional input on this issue.

> **CALFED Proposal:** Continue with this assumption unless additional information is provided.

Issue 3: What Assumption Should CALFED Make Regarding Agricultural Subsidy Programs?

Agricultural subsidy programs are currently being phased out nationwide. However, current law provides for them to be reinitiated. Crop subsidies have the potential to affect agricultural economics and agricultural economic modeling. This assumption also has some potential to affect demands for water.

CALFED Proposal: Assume that existing crop subsidy programs are phased out by 2020 consistent with current laws and regulations and consistent with assumptions made for the CVPIA PEIS. The effects of this assumption on demands will be verified as discussed under Issue 1.

Issue 4: What Are the Appropriate Flow Standards to use on the Mokelumne River for Both Existing Conditions and the No-Action Alternative?

EBMUD is currently required to meet certain flow standards below Camanche Reservoir based on a 1961 agreement with DFG. In recent years, EBMUD has generally been voluntarily operating the system to meet flows identified in the Lower Mokelumne River Management Plan (LMRMP) on a year-to-year basis. EBMUD is also in the process of negotiating new flow standards with DFG and USFWS (POA flows). EBMUD has indicated a preference for using the 1961 agreement for existing conditions and the POA flows under the No-Action Alternative. DFG has indicated a preference for using the LMRMP flows under both scenarios.

CALFED Proposal: Assume LMRMP flows under both existing conditions and the No-Action Alternative. These are the flows that the river is currently being managed to meet, and there is no other generally accepted flow standard to assume for the Mokelumne River under the No-Action Alternative.

Issue 5: What Water Demands should Be Used for Sacramento Valley (Tehama-Colusa Canal) CVP Water Users?

It is our understanding that historically the TC Canal users have used their full contract entitlements. In recent years, for a variety of reasons, some of the CVP contractors have used less than their contract allotments. Others have used more than their contract entitlements, however, through exchanges and transfers. As a whole, CVP water use within the basin has been approximately equal to the full contract entitlement. Assumptions used as part of the CVPIA PEIS process limited demands to full contract entitlements for each entity or recent historical water use (1980-1993), whichever was less.

CALFED Proposal: Use full contract entitlements to develop demands for TC Canal users. This approach accounts for water that is used within the area. However, as described above, these demands may not be met in all years because of the various constraints imposed on the system.

Issue 6: How Should CALFED Portray the 800,000 Acre-Foot/Year Dedication Required Under CVPIA?

There appears to be no general agreement on how to portray the long-term use of the 800,000 acre-foot/year dedication. The information currently available is described in the draft DWRSIM assumption sheets provided to the group at our first meeting under "CVPIA Flow Criteria". The CVPIA PEIS assumed that the 800,000 af/year would be used in the upstream river basins. There is some ongoing discussion on using part of the 800,000 to meet certain Delta needs.

CALFED Proposal: Use the "CVPIA Flow Criteria" assumptions, updated as necessary and available, in both its existing conditions and No-Action Alternative modeling pending further refinement and definition of these criteria. No better information is available. If, during the CALFED modeling and impact assessment process, further information becomes available, a decision will have to be made on whether to and how to incorporate that information.

Issue 7: What Assumptions Should Be Made Regarding 1995 Water Quality Control Plan Standards at Vernalis?

At our first meeting, we proposed to use the 1995 Water Quality Control Plan (WQCP) standards for existing conditions. This approach was generally accepted. However, some participants pointed out that the flow standard at Vernalis cannot be met in all years because only Reclamation is required to meet the standards and the Stanislaus River system cannot be operated to meet these standards in dry years.

We also suggested that the 1995 WQCP standards be used for the No-Action Alternative and that CALFED assume that the standards would be met. Several participants suggested that because the State Water Resources Control Board is in the process of reviewing the standards, and because there is no certainty about the standard that will ultimately be adopted, CALFED should look at a range of potential standards.

CALFED Proposal: For existing conditions, use the existing situation as the modeling assumption. This approach would show that the Vernalis flow standard would not be met in some years. For the No-Action Alternative, show that the standard would be met, but do not imply or impose responsibility for meeting this standard on any particular party or set of parties. By looking at both scenarios, this approach allows CALFED to examine a reasonable range of flows, and it would provide useful information regarding the "water cost" of meeting the standard without attributing responsibility to any particular entities.

In addition, as noted in previous discussions, CALFED will continue to look at the water supply effects of recent changes in the water quality standards (i.e., D-1485 to the 1995 WQCP) to clearly describe the "water cost" of this change.